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OUR WAR WITH GERMANY

IV

(June 17—July 17.)

Two events of exceptional significance and interest mark the fourth month of American participation in the war between autocracy and democracy—the arrival of American fighting men in considerable force on French soil, to take up there the final training preliminary to their entrance into the actual conflict; and the exhilarating renewal of the Russian offensive in Galicia, with its immediate and striking successes. The first is the chief purely American event of the month, certainly from the spectacular point of view, although it may not have all the ultimate importance that attaches to certain other circumstances which, even though they are clearly beginnings, have hardly attained as yet the stature of full growth. The second, being Russian, and therefore not technically entitled to consideration in a review of merely American activities, yet does have a sure claim to inclusion here not only in the tie that binds the newest of the great world democracies to us, but also in the steady encouragement and the strenuous efforts at assistance that have proceeded from America to Russia.

Our domestic situation during this month has been one chiefly of Congressional and Administrative wrangling; of bickering over proposals of legislation, or execution of laws already passed, or, sometimes, regarding arrangements that it was attempted to effect extra legally and *ultra vires*. The situation at home is still marked by confusion and uncertainty especially with regard to some of the most important items of national equipment for the war. But as this is written, just at the close of the review period, there seems to be developing a better tendency, and the fifth month now promises to open, as the fourth did, with a distinctly successful achievement.

Subscriptions for the Liberty Loan, which closed just as the preceding instalment of this REVIEW went to press, aggregated the colossal sum of \$3,035,226,850. This was an oversubscription of more than fifty per cent. More than four million different subscriptions were received, representing a national participation in a first loan not accomplished by any other of the nations involved in this conflict. This oversubscription made necessary the curtail-

ment of allotments to certain subscribers. The Treasury department ruled that full allotment would be made to all subscribers taking bonds to the amount of \$10,000 or less, and that a graduated reduction of allotments would be made on subscriptions above that sum, so that the greatest percentage of reduction would fall on the largest subscriptions.

The Liberty Loan campaign was followed immediately by a Red Cross drive to secure a hundred millions by private donation for the work of the Red Cross with our armies. This campaign also, was successful, although not heavily oversubscribed as was the Government loan.

As the payments to the Treasury on the Liberty bonds bring funds under the disposition of the Government the amount of the American loans to our Allies, as provided in the seven billion dollar bond bill, mounts steadily. It has now exceeded \$1,300,000,000. The United States is taking a large part in financing England and some of the other Allies, the loan to England now aggregating nearly three-quarters of a billion.

General Pershing had been in Paris long enough to have both that side of the Atlantic and this become accustomed to the idea of the American general and his staff working in the French capital, when this country was thrilled on the afternoon of June 27 by the publication of dispatches from "a French port" announcing the arrival of the first contingent of the American soldiers who are to fight the Germans under Pershing's orders. The departure of these troops had been conducted with such quiet skill that the vast majority of Americans, even in the port from which they sailed, had not the least notion that they had gone, and the first general American information that they had left was conveyed in the announcement of their arrival in France. The news that they had crossed the ocean successfully was received with very much the same manifestations of emotion that would have greeted the receipt of the news of a victory.

But it was followed promptly by word from Washington that the publication had been premature, and there was obvious perturbation among the different offices of censorship in the capital. It appeared, at length, that the several sections of the expedition had not all arrived when the first publication was made, and it had been feared in Washington that this premature publication might endanger the safety of the later sections. However, they all arrived safely, and General Pershing said that "not a man was lost, nor was there any serious illness." The French newspapers had been restrained from printing the news until the despatches of the American correspondents were permitted to come through, some days after the arrival of the first section. But the British papers printed the news on the first day. Just when there was a disposition in this country to make inquiry into these circumstances, on the afternoon

of July 3, the Committee on Public Information in Washington, whose chairman is credited with being the head of the censorate at the national capital, issued an announcement that the troop ships had been attacked twice by German submarines—once well this side of what had been regarded as the possible danger zone, and again the next day. The first attack was said to have been at night, in considerable force, and the Information Committee reported that it had been repulsed by superb work on the part of the American warships convoying the transports. The Committee announced that its report was based on an official report from Rear-Admiral Gleaves who commanded the convoy.

This publication stirred the country profoundly. But it was followed by a very singular circumstance. An Associated Press correspondent, who was travelling to France on one of the convoying warships, telegraphed a categorical denial that there had been any attack whatever on the troop ships. The official report from Rear-Admiral Gleaves was not made public, and as this is written a resolution is pending in the Senate, calling on the Navy Department for full information concerning the affair.

The landing of American troops in France was the occasion of the greatest enthusiasm among the people of the port where they landed. The Americans were promptly christened with a name which seems likely to stick to them as long as they are in service in foreign lands. "*Sammee! Sammee!*" shouted the enthusiastic French, "*Vive Sammee!*"

The report that the troop ships had been attacked by submarines led of course to a sharp outburst of spy talk. It was asserted that the Germans must have known of the sailing and route of the troop ships, and must have had information on which to arrange these attacks. Whether this affair was the cause of it or not, there has been a tightening of the surveillance of enemy aliens, and several prominent Germans have been interned, including one man who was an assistant to Dr. Albert, the German financial agent in New York; another who was a prominent electrician and a well-known New York City banker.

Meanwhile the work of preparation for the new American army has gone forward rapidly and steadily, and with extremely little fuss and feathers. The organization of the preliminaries for the selection by draft of the 500,000 men for the first contingent of the new National Army, and of the additional 125,000 for the reserve battalions for this first contingent is practically completed, and the draft is likely to be made even before this appears in print. The order for mobilization of the National Guard has been issued, and before this is on the press many of the Guardsmen will be in their concentration stations. At the same time an immense amount of work has been done in preparing the equipment for the new armies, securing the supplies of clothing, food and other materials, and

making ready the cantonments where the different divisions of the National Army are to be trained. Contracts for the building work at these cantonments have been let and every effort is making to push the work so as to have as many as possible of them near readiness for the men early in September. So with some of its men actually in France, some hundreds of thousands more about to go into camp preparatory to going to France, and another half million about to be selected to begin their training, the Army is making every effort to get where it can strike effective blows.

Very little information has been permitted to reach the public concerning the activities of the Navy. Announcement of successful recruiting is made, and of the letting of contracts for construction of submarine chasers, together with information from South America of the arrival of an American squadron at Montevideo. And Secretary Daniels has asked Congress to appropriate \$45,000,000 for navy aeroplanes, hydroplanes and seaplanes, and another hundred million for more destroyers and chasers and boats of that general type.

The air phase of military preparation has received much attention throughout the month. The Board on Aircraft Production, of the Advisory Commission of the Council of National Defense, has recommended a huge appropriation for this construction. Men of eminence in various lines which gives them authority have argued that the expenditure of half a billion dollars or more would be certain to end the war soon and favorably. They want to "put out the eyes" of the Germans in the air. This proposal has received marked attention and wide support. President Wilson himself is said to be strongly in favor of something of this kind. Some of the men advocating the measure have urged the appropriation of a billion dollars for airplane construction. The Aircraft Production Board estimates that an output of 2,000 airplanes a month can be accomplished by November. The figure most favored for appropriation is \$600,000,000. On July 14th—anniversary of the fall of the Bastille—the House passed unanimously the bill authorizing the President to construct airplanes without number and to increase the signal corps of the Army without limit in this direction and appropriating \$640,000,000 for those purposes. Almost unlimited power, authority and money were given to the President without hampering restrictions. Hearings had been held by the House Committee on this bill in secret for a week. It was argued that information as to American plans for aircraft production should not be made public, and the effort was to produce a bill that would confer the authority without giving undue information to the enemy.

While our troops were landing in France and getting ready to encounter the deadly products of German ingenuity, and while at home Army and Navy were exerting themselves to the utmost in further preparation, Congress has spent almost the entire month

in wrangling over the question as to whether or not it will grant power to the President to control the production and distribution of necessities. That one bill has been the unfinished business in the Senate for the whole month, and has been mauled and twisted and amended and altered until its best friend would hardly recognize it, so that at length Senators Martin and Simmons, the two leaders of the majority party in the Senate, openly appealed to the President for his advice and assistance. The Senate having agreed by unanimous consent to vote on the bill and all amendments to action on July 21, the prospect is that some kind of food control bill will be passed by the Senate before it adjourns on that day. The House passed this bill on June 23, after a week of discussion. The final vote was 365 to 5. Just before taking final action on the bill the House adopted an amendment providing that no foods, food materials or feeds should be used in the production of alcohol or alcoholic beverages, except alcohol for medical and scientific and government uses. This bill went at once to the Senate, and was substituted for the measure then under consideration in the Senate. It immediately opened the whole range of the prohibition question in the Senate, and immensely complicated the question of food control. Opponents of food control at once seized upon this prohibition feature of the bill as a means of defeating it, and others who are more interested in prohibition than in food control took advantage of this opportunity to secure action on their favorite measure.

Literally scores of amendments were drafted and submitted, dealing with all conceivable phases of the question of food control and prohibition.

Meantime the first food bill, providing for the greatly needed survey or census, which was passed by both houses over six weeks ago, is held up in conference awaiting action on the control bill.

While this wrangling went on the President and Herbert Hoover, whom Mr. Wilson had announced as his choice for food administrator, made repeated public appeals for action. It was pointed out that the new crop is coming forward, and that because of the delay on this bill the market is absolutely quiescent; that if anything is to be done it must be done quickly. Still the Senate could not be hurried. The President wrote to Mr. Hoover asking him to begin his organization any way and to do what he could without the enactment of the law. Thereupon Mr. Hoover issued a public appeal to the women of the country, urging them to join the Food Administration by signing a pledge card agreeing to work for the conservation of food and prevention of waste. "Food will decide the war," said Mr. Hoover in this appeal. Mrs. Wilson, wife of the President, was one of the first to register in the Women's Food Army. Mr. Hoover pointed out that the saving of a single one-pound loaf of bread per week by each of the hundred million people in the United

States would mean the releasing of 100,000,000 bushels of wheat for shipment to our Allies in the course of a year. As an incentive to saving and an illustration of what the united action of the American people could accomplish he showed also that the saving of two cents per person per meal would amount in a year to more than the first issue of the Liberty Loan, or over two billion dollars.

Before the Senate Committee on Agriculture Mr. Hoover testified that speculators had taken more than \$250,000,000 from the country in flour alone, and that the entire output of the American canning industry for 1917 had been sold before any of the materials reached any of the canners.

As the bill stands in the Senate at this writing it covers a wide range of products besides foods, feeds and fuels, and includes a provision that no foods or feeds shall be used for the production of alcohol for beverage purposes, at the same time giving the President power to commandeer stocks of distilled liquors in bond and to say whether the prohibition of the use of food materials shall apply also to beer and light wines. This is a power that the President does not care to exercise and he advised Senators who consulted him late in June not to include beer and wines in the bill. But the President has asked the Senators for a good many powers which they were not at all pleased at granting, and this beer prohibition question seemed to offer an opportunity to grant him something willingly.

Conferences between Democratic and Republican leaders are reported to have reached agreement on a measure creating a Food Board of three, subject to confirmation by the Senate—where Mr. Hoover has some virulent opponents—and limiting the control to shipments in interstate commerce. That emasculates the bill and is described as wholly unsatisfactory to the Administration.

The House has occupied part of the month by putting through several minor war measures, and two important ones, that known as the "Enemy Trading Bill" and the bill providing for unlimited aeroplane construction. The House passed a rivers and harbors bill, a measure increasing the membership of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the bill known as the "Priority Bill" conferring on the President the power to determine preference between shipments by rail, one of the less controversial of the important war measures. The Senate found time, between bouts with the food control bill, to pass a "daylight saving" bill, which is not to go into effect until next year, and consideration of which the House has postponed until the next session.

Acting under authority of the so-called "embargo" section of the Espionage act the President, on June 22, signed an executive order creating an Exports Council, for the control of exports. It consists of the Secretaries of State, Agriculture and Commerce, and the Food Administrator. It has already prepared for an Advisory Board which shall do the actual work of controlling exports, and a

bureau of licenses has been erected in the Department of Commerce. On July 8 the President issued a proclamation setting the exports control in motion from July 15. In accordance with the terms of the statute the President gave a list of the articles to be controlled, including fuels, foods and food grains, fodder and feeds, iron and steel and their products, ship plates, arms, munitions, explosives and so forth. The countries named included practically every one listed in the geography, so that the Exports Council is now equipped with authority to lay a complete prohibition upon the shipments of any of these materials from the United States if it finds cause for doing so. Our European Allies are basing great hopes upon this American control of exports. Figures have been published by the Government to show that very great supplies of food and feeds have been going into Germany through Holland and Sweden especially. Government reports showed that food sufficient for 7,700,000 soldiers for a year went into Germany from Holland alone. The neutral countries, especially Scandinavia and Holland, have manifested great anxiety over the exercise of this new power by this Government. President Wilson, in announcing it, explained that our purpose would be to supply first ourselves, then our Allies and then to do what we can for neutrals. But the figures published of the situation among our Allies and of our own crop prospects leave very little possible supply for the neutrals.

The Root Commission to Russia, which had just reached its post when the last instalment of this REVIEW was prepared, has now concluded its labors with every indication of success and is about to return to the United States. In a speech on the occasion of their reception by the Council of Ministers in Petrograd Mr. Root said, "We fight for your freedom as well as for ours, and we ask that you fight for our freedom as well as for your own." In reply Minister Tereschtenko said, "We shall fight together to secure liberty, freedom and happiness for all the world." It was after that that the new Russian drive in Galicia began. While this was going on in Russia the new Russian mission was received with enthusiasm in this country. In receiving Ambassador Bakhmeteff President Wilson promised new Russia the "full support and steadfast friendship" of America.

In reply to the Belgian Mission, which had presented him a letter from King Albert, the President made a significant statement regarding the conditions which will satisfy the United States when the time comes to talk of peace. He said that America "welcomed the opportunity to express our solemn determination that on the inevitable day of victory Belgium shall be restored to the place she has so nobly won."

While Congress—especially the Senate—has been backing and filling over the question of food control there has been a somewhat similar indecision among some of the executive offices over measures

of war preparation, chiefly prices for different war materials, especially steel and coal. On June 20 the Federal Trade Commission made a report to the President and Congress proposing the pooling of all coal and coke production and distribution, and of all water and rail transportation, the transportation companies to receive a reasonable rate of compensation for the public use of their properties and the coal and coke producers to have a uniform profit per ton. Several hundred coal operators gathered in Washington late in June in conference on coal prices, and were addressed very frankly by Secretary Lane, of the Department of the Interior, one of the members of the Council of National Defense. Subsequently the operators agreed to the principle of government price fixing, and in conference with Mr. Lane and a member of the Federal Trade Commission agreed upon a price of \$3 a ton at the mines for bituminous coal. The next day Mr. Baker, Secretary of War, repudiated this price and termed it, "exorbitant, oppressive and unjust." After there had been time for interference by the President, Mr. Baker explained that he had not intended any reflection upon any one in what he said, but he did think \$3 too high.

Simultaneously there was much discussion over steel prices. Mr. Denman, chairman of the Shipping Board, let it be known that General Goethals, with whom he had a difference of opinion as to wooden or steel ship construction, was inclined to make contracts for ship steel at \$95 a ton, which was a good deal higher than he could approve. The navy was getting steel for \$65 a ton and Mr. Denman thought the Shipping Board ought to get it for \$56 a ton. The upshot of this was a visit to Washington of a committee of the Iron and Steel Institute composed of the heads of several of the big steel concerns. They reached the capital just as the President issued a statement denouncing profiteering, assailing ship owners for high freight rates and declaring that fair prices must prevail, and that our Allies and the public generally must have the same prices that the Government gets. The steel conference resulted in an agreement by the steel men to furnish the Government all they possibly can produce, and to have the prices determined costs, upon which a fair profit is to be allowed.

Thus the fourth month of our war with Germany closes with something actually accomplished and a fair prospect of considerably more.

(This record is as of July 17 and is to be continued.)